

A FEW
FAST ONES
FROM
A GOOD
MIXER

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This booklet was inspired by a conversation between a veteran soda fountain manager and a beginner going to work for him. It is published in the belief that it will be interesting and helpful to all men who handle the controls of the soda fountain.

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SO you're my new helper, eh?

And you're nineteen, and your name's Gus, and you never handled the controls behind a soda fountain before.

Well, Gus; you've got a lot to learn. Anybody that's nineteen has got a lot to learn.

And here's Lesson Number One, Kid. Don't think you've got a lousy job. That's what ailed the mug that worked here before you. He thought he had just a punk job that he'd hang on to until some other position had itself made to order for him. Whenever you see a guy in a sweet spot today, just remember that he got there because he had somethin' on the ball.

This washout that was fired yesterday used to squawk to me that there was no future in mixing drinks and settin' out sandwiches for people at a soda fountain. I gave him an argument on that. "The future isn't in the job — it's in you and your point of view," I used to tell him. But a guy like him, that merely uses his head to separate his ears, can't see that any more than he can see a spade flush in a tunnel.

Tending to this soda fountain is a very important work. You're learning one phase of how to run a store. Use your noodle and maybe you'll have your own

store some day. Do you know where the boss started? Behind a fountain — when he wasn't making deliveries or cleaning the sidewalks or washing the windows for *his* boss.

If you happen to ask the boss he will tell you that the investigations he has studied show that *six out of every ten* people who go into a drug store stop at the soda fountain. Not only that, but out of every dollar's worth of goods bought in a drug store, 25 cents or one-fourth is spent at the fountain.

That proves that the soda fountain is popular with a store's customers — if it's run right. Another thing the boss will tell you, is that it's been proved that if people like what they get at a certain fountain, they'll keep coming back to it — and also buy other merchandise in the store.

But, supposing they don't like the fountain. Supposing, for example, you give a dude a Coca-Cola, that isn't mixed just right and isn't quite as cold as it should be. Is he goin' to put up a big beef about it? Not by a dam site! Life's too short and there are too many *good* soda fountains for anybody to foam at the mouth and start a revolution about a nickel drink. What they *will*





do is go to some other soda fountain where they get what they want... and then they buy their toilet goods and camera films and what-have-you at the new place.

Now stay awake, Gus: I want to give you the lowdown about a few things. In running a soda fountain right, you want to start with yourself. I noticed right away that you're shaved and you've got clean hands and finger nails. That's right. The point is to *always* be like that. The fellow who starts each day by scraping his face is a jump ahead of the punk who shows up with a weary-willie stubble on his chin.

How's that? . . . Change aprons often? Absolutely!

Always wear a clean apron, Gus. Nobody wants to be waited on by anyone who looks like he'd just bathed his dog and dried the mutt on his apron.

Now about the fountain. One thing that everybody likes is to sit down to something good to eat and drink at a nice, clean table, where the tablecloth is snowy-white and the glasses sparkle and all that. Well, they expect the same thing when they stop for a drink or a sandwich at a soda fountain.

So, we got to keep this fountain and back-bar as

clean and shiny as a new dime. You can't have any funny smells that will make a customer feel like he's having his refreshment in a glue works. Nor does anybody like to see his drink mixed in a glass that's wet from rinsing or one that's dry and streaky. Glasses have got to shine just like the handles on the pearly gates. Wipe 'em with clean cloths.

See those glasses on the back bar, Gus? Did you ever see glasses shine any prettier? Look at them — they gleam like the eyes of an Airedale inspecting a pork chop! We always keep a bunch of clean, sparkling glasses back there for what the boss calls the 'psychological effect' on the trade.

People see how clean and nice they are and it immediately gives them the impression that the whole place is just as spotless and clean. And it is! We just want to be sure to remind them of it.

And that attractive display of fresh fruit on the back bar is put there to give the place what you call an 'appetite appeal' — to make 'em hungry.

Another very important item, Gus, is to keep the counter clean. To get a better idea of what I mean, just barge in some day at the drug store five blocks down the boulevard and give that fountain a





going over. You'll see what I mean.

They have a lot of stuff piled up on the counter to get in people's way and what little space that's open is as greasy as an Indian's blanket and always puddled with water and spilled drinks. That's why you never see anybody much buying any drinks in that place. At least not a second time. Honest, that guy's fountain would be an ideal place to hide a body as far as any customers discovering it is concerned.

Now here you'll see that the moment a customer's finished, I'm right on top of the spot with a clean, moist towel. I always try to let him see me wipe up after him so he'll carry away the idea that he's been served in a clean place.

What? . . . You say you always try to be clean and neat?

Yeah — that didn't get past me. I noticed, Gus, that that 5-year-old roadster you parked across the street is all cleaned up and as shiny as polish will make it. Why? It's my guess that you're trying to make a good impression on some doll-baby.

Well, we got to make a good impression on the public, kid. That's why every night the counter slab

here gets scrubbed with soap and water — all metal gets polished — all foot-marks washed off the front panels.

I got a card tacked up here that tells you what to do to keep a fountain clean. The guy that wrote it not only knew his onions but was also well acquainted with his turnips, rutabagas and gefuellte fisch. It tells you anything you want to know about cleaning a fountain, taking care of the mechanical end and how to handle the syrups and such. Read it. Lincoln used to read by the fire-light. You can read by electric lights. Maybe you'll be a greater man than Lincoln.

Next, Gus, we come to your attitude toward the customer. There's two wrong attitudes you can have. One is to be plain, downright ornery. The other is to be so broken out with personality that you give the customer a pain in the neck that reaches all the way down to the hips.

The last guy that had your job was in the first class. He had a permanent scowl stitched into his pan. He acted like everybody that came in for a drink was doing it just for pure cussedness to put him to trouble and bother.

On the other hand, it isn't such a hot idea to bear down too hard on





this personality blah. Give a customer a friendly smile, Gus, like you'd grin at your Maw. Don't show all your teeth and your adenoids in a phony smile that the other guy can see is insincere. Say "Yes, Sir" and "Yes, Ma'am" but don't sprinkle too many

'Sirs' into your conversation. The movie ushers will think you're copying them and get sore.

Probably the most important thing on an automobile, Gus, is the carbureter. When it isn't working right, the car don't run. Well, sir: the carbureter of the fountain business is the carbonator. When carbonation isn't right, the fountain business folds up and lays an egg — a bad egg.

Listen — the carbonated drinks bring in more jack than any other item sold here. Why, better than every third customer asks for Coca-Cola.

What's that, Gus? . . . What is carbonation?

It just means adding carbon dioxide gas to water, which makes the water lively and bubbly. The carbonated water is then squirted into the syrup. Carbonation, if it's done right, brings out the flavor of syrups to perfection. If it isn't done right, it makes a drink taste like lukewarm soup left over from last Thursday. And the chief things that make carbona-

tion go hay-wire are heat, grease and over-agitation.

Everything possible has to be done to keep this carbonated water cold, but a little heat is bound to muscle in and release some of the gas. So, it's always best to draw off a few ounces of carbonated water before you squirt it into the glass—especially if you haven't used the tap lately.

Grease and oil also kill off carbonation — in two ways, Gus. One when it gets inside the carbonator and the pipes and the other when the glasses get dirty and greasy. Both are bad.

Now, by 'over-agitation' spoiling carbonation I mean too much stirring of the water and syrup after you've filled the glass. Stirring too much makes the gas leave the drink too fast and what's left is as dull as a report from the Bureau of Fisheries and as lifeless as Mark Antony. This guy, Mark Antony, who was in love with Cleopatra, once was full of life, you know, but too much stirring around killed him.

In this fountain business, young feller, there's one idea that wants to follow you around like a hip pocket. That is that refrigeration is very important—v-e-r-y important.

The American people have two very definite characteristics, Gus. One is that they know what they



want and the other is that they get what they want—or else they go some other place. Two things I know every American wants are lower taxes and their drinks as cold as the credit policy of a bank. That doesn't mean hand him a glassful of cracked ice, either. The ice should be measured.

How much ice? . . . I'm coming to that, kid.

Mixing ice, syrup and carbonated water together should be done only one way—just right. Supposing you paid a tailor dough to make you a suit and he just guessed at the measurements. And one sleeve was three inches longer than the other. And the collar was high enough to tangle with your ears. Wouldn't you feel like choking him a little bit?

Well, sir; a customer that comes in here and pays you to mix him a drink has a right to expect the right measurements for his dough. At that fountain down the street I was telling you about, they sometimes shovel ice into your glass like they were filling up a trench. Then again they put just a dab of syrup in your glass and fill it with lukewarm carbonated water. Worst of all, they tamper with the Coca-Cola syrup by diluting it with simple syrup, and some fountains even add water in an effort to make a little more profit.



There's two bad features to that. One is that the boss says it's against the law to tamper with a trade-marked product and that it gets stores into court and trouble. The second bad feature is that there's a loss, not a profit, in doing it. You lose customers and that means you lose money. People know the taste of a real, uncut Coca-Cola and they won't stand for doctoring or substitutes. The formula for Coca-Cola hasn't been changed in 45 years, because it's *right*. It's a perfect blend of natural flavors. It's hard to fool folks, because they know that flavor blend, especially those that's been drinking it since before you were born. The sense of taste is supposed to be the most sensitive of the five senses, Gus, a hard one to fool, in other words. Believe me, if variety is the spice of life, then life at *that* fountain is just a bowl of chili.



In this store we have a boss who knows it's good business for him to give his personal attention to the soda fountain. He says that fifty cents out of every dollar sales is gross profit, and that the net profit he makes depends on good management. He knows the value of serving Coca-Cola right—because he *knows* the profit it pays him.

Now, hand me that Coca-Cola glass, Gus, and I'll show you what I mean by serving a drink right.



THERE'S a reason behind this thin Coca-Cola glass, Gus, and it's just plain common-sense. The answer is that a thick glass raises the temperature of a drink — while a thin one doesn't. Prove it yourself. Draw some carbonated water into a thick glass and also a thin one. Then take the temperature of each — and you'll find the same water colder in the thin glass.



HERE'S the next step — draw a full ounce of Coca-Cola syrup into the glass. Get that, Gus, a full ounce of Coca-Cola syrup — no more and no less. If you give 'em too little syrup one time and too much syrup another time your customers will quit you — they like 'em uniform. It's just as easy to do it right as it is to be careless.



NEXT you add about an ounce of finely chipped ice. And be sure that you use chipped ice, Gus. Don't get the idea that the ice must be in big enough hunks for Eliza to run across to escape from the bloodhounds. Ice is used to get across the idea of cold — not to cover up the use of warm carbonated water. That's bad business.



NOW you are all set to put in the carbonated water. But before you go ahead remember that if the draft arm hasn't been in use for a few moments it's best to let a little carbonated water run off before you fill your glass. That way you get rid of the warm stuff and give your customer nice, cold water that's got plenty of gas.



THIS is the wrong way to draw carbonated water into a glass, kid. The glass is too far from the draft arm. The water falls into it with so much of a splash that all the carbon dioxide gas gets out. Some guys even go so far as to stir at the same time—which makes the trouble double.

ANOTHER dumb stunt is to put the carbonated water into the glass first and then add the Coca-Cola syrup. You can't ever get a good mixture that way. Now, Gus, I'll show you the right way to use carbonated water . . . The right way is first the syrup, then your chipped ice and last your carbonated water.





BRING your glass up close to the draft arm, Gus. Use the coarse stream and tilt your glass so the carbonated water hits the side and runs in gently. By doing this you avoid a lot of churning up and you don't turn all the carbon dioxide gas loose. Don't ever stir while the water is running in.



NOW you stir the drink with a spoon to mix it thoroughly. Just four or five gentle stirs with a spoon are enough. That makes a nice, lively drink. You don't have to act like you were beating an egg or spanking old Uncle Tom. If you stir too much all the gas escapes and you have a flat drink.



NOW everything is ready, Gus, and you serve it with a smile — just a nice, friendly smile. And make it snappy. A customer who comes in tired wants his ‘pause that refreshes’ quick — he wants to bounce back to normal. And remember, people hate false politeness. A nice, friendly smile and a “Thank you” will bring them back again and again.



THAT'S valuable advertising space up there, Gus. And that's why we decorate our fountain with Coca-Cola festoons and not with ads for other drinks that run up a sales total of only three or four for the week. Remember, one of every three drinks called for is Coca-Cola. Some foun-



tain owners think they make more profit on fancy drinks and dishes, but the boss told me he had studied the recent Nielsen survey and found that seven items account for 93 per cent of the total fountain net profit and that Coca-Cola alone accounts for about 70 per cent of it. Ain't that sumpin'?



THE big thing to remember, Gus, is the value of the soda fountain in attracting new customers and holding the old ones. This fountain offers the easiest means of getting new customers into the store, the surest way — if it's run right — of tying the customer to the store for repeat sales and a direct help in building up sales in other departments.

The boss tells me that six out of every ten people who come into a drug store pause at the fountain — and that one of every three of these fountain customers ask for Coca-Cola. That's why I told you, Gus, that it doesn't pay to tamper with a product that means so much to us in bringing people into the store. They know what they want — so see that they get it.

The fountain not only brings them into the store but sends an average of one out of every six persons to another department for toothpaste, razor blades, soap, powder, lipstick, writing paper, cold creams, shaving lotion and the like of that. And, remember that the fountain appeals to all classes, and to men, women and children alike, kid. I'm not expecting you to learn everything there is to learn overnight, Gus, but if you just stay awake and do your stuff you'll catch on quick. The boss knows what he can expect from a soda fountain. Just give him what he wants young fellow and you won't have to worry about the future.

Like I said in the beginning, a guy 19 years old has got a lot to learn. One big thing you've got to learn is that there's no future in any job unless *you* put it there. You'll get valuable experience here. You'll learn a lot about merchandising and the buying habits of people. That's information that will be valuable to you and to me if we ever have places of our own some

day. Keep your eyes open. Watch what's going on around you. Always have an eye on the other guy who is just a step farther than you are, because you can't tell when there might come a chance for you to step into his shoes.

To sum it all up, Gus, you can make or break this fountain, you know — and that means you can make or break yourself. O.K., kid—get busy now and good luck to you!



